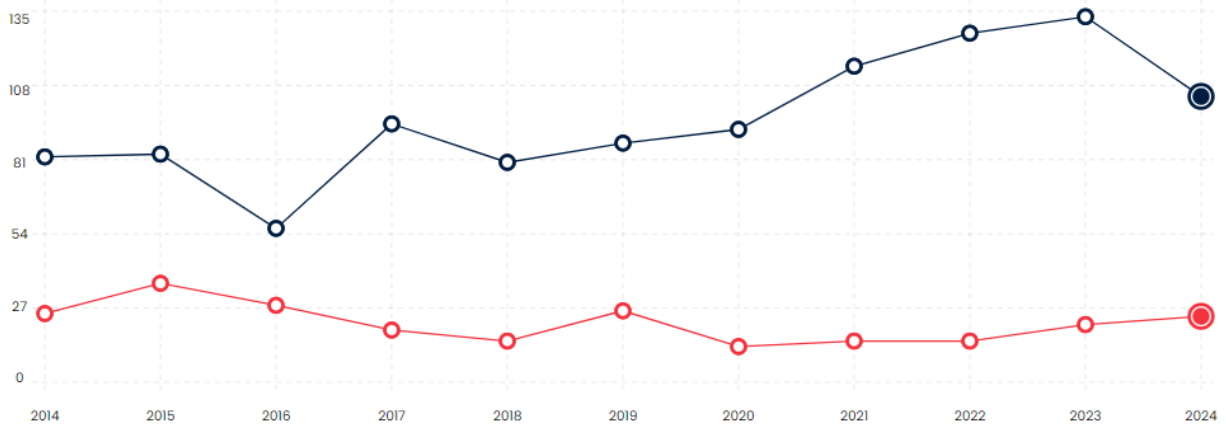
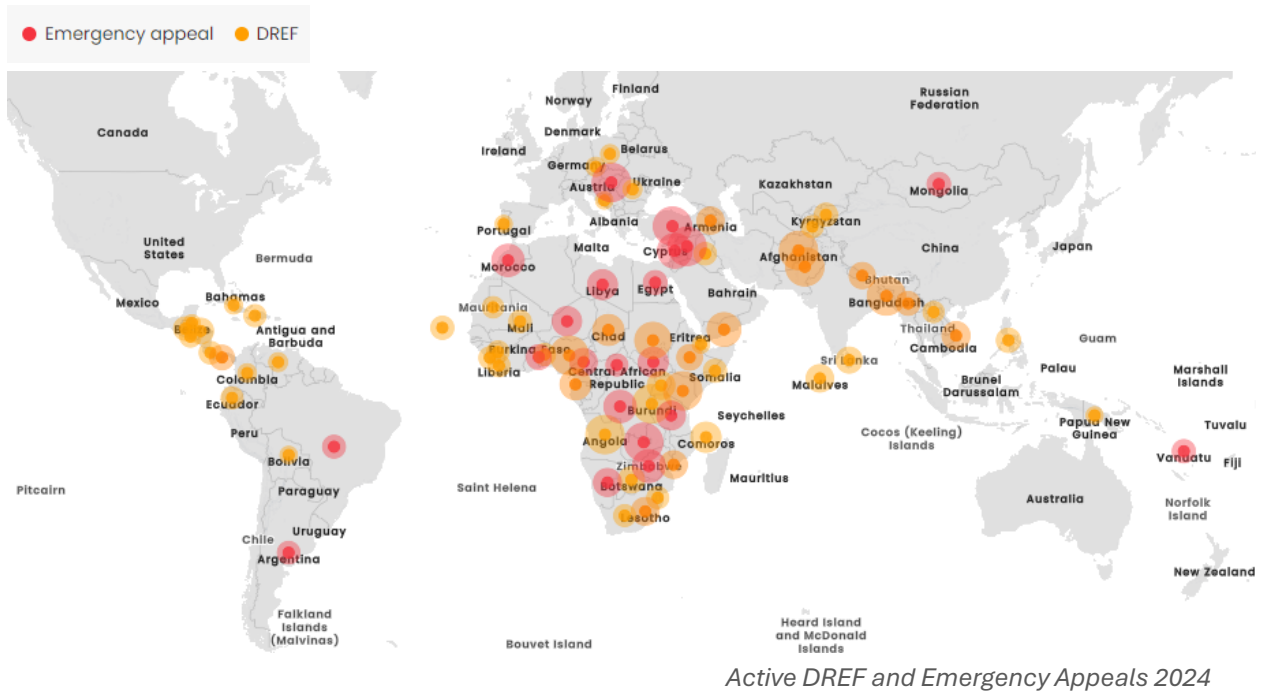


# EMERGENCY RESPONSE FRAMEWORK (ERF)

## A Guide for the IFRC Secretariat



Global DREF (Blue) and Emergency Appeal (Red) trends from 2014 to 2024

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## A. THE PURPOSE OF THE ERF

The Emergency Response Framework (ERF) of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) aims to provide overall guidance and architecture for the Secretariat's emergency response operations. As per the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the IFRC function is "to assist the National Societies (NS) in their disaster relief preparedness, in the organization of their relief actions and in the relief operations themselves" and "to organize, coordinate and direct international relief actions in accordance with the Principles and Rules adopted by the IFRC General Assembly and endorsed by the International Conference."<sup>1</sup>

The IFRC is guided by its Strategy 2030, which emphasizes the central importance of National Societies and the need for a strong, well-functioning Secretariat to support them in delivering assistance to vulnerable communities. The Secretariat's Agenda for Renewal (Renewal<sup>2</sup>) sets out the strategic priorities to support the IFRC in achieving its Strategy 2030 targets and delivering effective and efficient services, programs and operations through its National Societies to people affected by disasters or situations of vulnerability. Inspired by the principles of Strategy 2030, the ERF operationalizes the Renewal by strengthening the Secretariat's ability to respond with greater agility, clarity, and coherence while remaining relevant for future challenges. It translates Renewal commitments into a predictable and forward looking system that ensures timely, principled, and accountable support to National Societies, grounded in the Triple R mindset—Response, Resilience, and Respect.

This revised ERF builds on the previous version issued in 2017 and has been updated to reflect Renewal priorities, reinforcing localized and risk informed decision making, promoting more efficient ways of working across the Secretariat, including the provision of more guidance for high-level, complex disasters and crises (Red-level and some Orange-level emergencies). The Renewal also prioritizes situations that demand new approaches, such as multi-country or multi-region crises and health emergencies.

The ERF provides an overarching framework to align the IFRC Secretariat's systems and tools for emergency response (figure 1 shows how the ERF interacts with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the IFRC membership in disasters and crises). It also outlines the overall processes, mechanisms, roles and responsibilities across the Secretariat's disaster and crisis response functions and aims to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the Secretariat's support and coordination for National Societies, to enable them to deliver high quality operations with greater impact for people and communities in situations of crisis and vulnerability.

A priority of the ERF is to ensure accountability for decisions and outcomes in any emergency response across all levels of the organization. The IFRC is a decentralized organization committed to locally led action, with a decentralized architecture, however, it must still ensure accountability and consistency in its support to its members. To this end, it has adopted an always ready "One Secretariat" approach to emergency response, which is focused on a trusted, united and agile Secretariat that ensures the alignment of key accountability measures across all levels. These are in line with current quality and accountability initiatives in the wider humanitarian and development sectors, including the

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<sup>1</sup> [Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance](#), 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout the ERF, documents such as the Renewal are referenced, [Annex 12](#) provides links to their locations

Core Humanitarian Standards on Quality and Accountability, the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the SPHERE Standards.

### Key guiding documents for the movement, membership and Secretariat in Disasters and Crises.

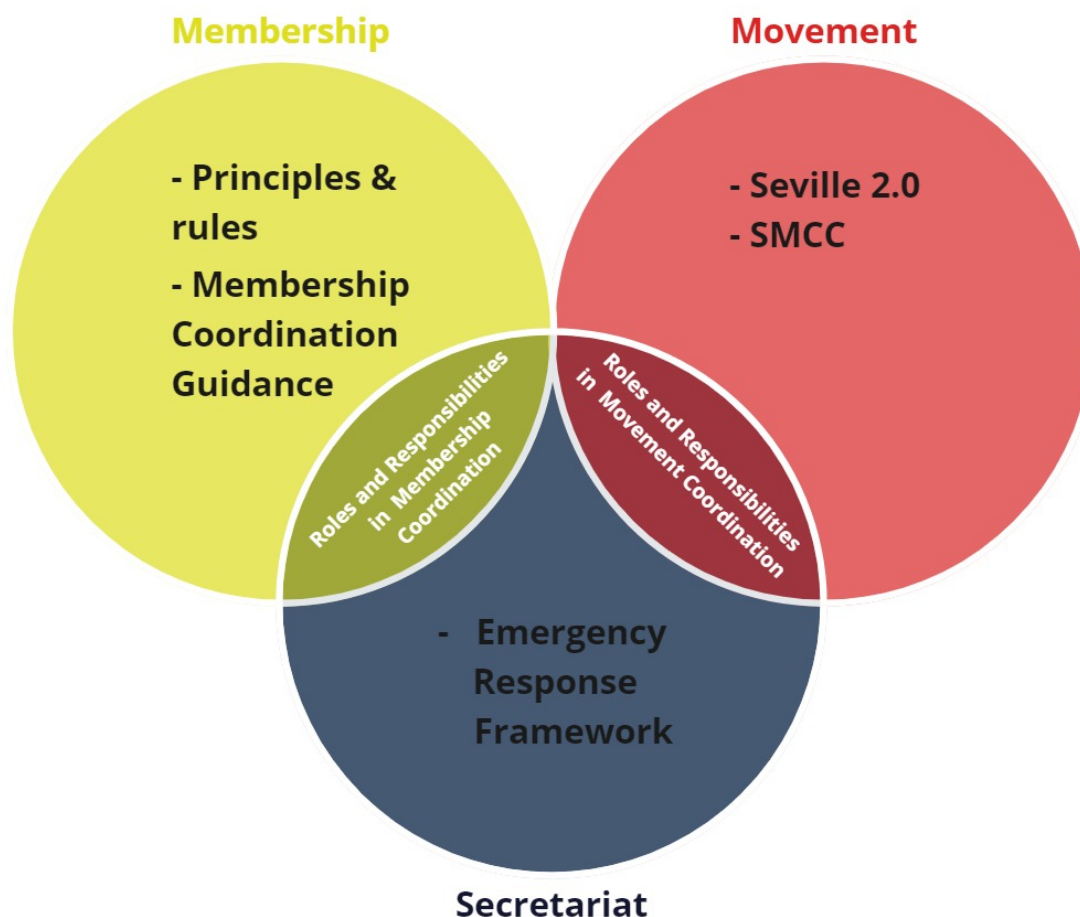


Figure 1: Simplified representation of how the ERF interacts with the wider movement and membership guidance in disasters and crises

The ERF is not intended to be a stand-alone document. It is interdependent with other core IFRC Secretariat guidelines and frameworks. In addition to Strategy 2030 and the Renewal mentioned above, it also links with the IFRC's Disaster Risk Management Policy (2021), the IFRC's Guidelines for Membership Coordination in Emergencies, the updated Principles and Rules of Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance, Seville 2.0, the ForeSEE 2.0 guidance, and the Immediate Response Protocol (IRP). The ERF aims to enable the achievement of the goals set out in these documents and is aligned with their approaches.

The ERF is not a set of standard operating procedures and does not replace programmatic guidance. Instead, it is supplemented by additional, detailed operational procedures for individual tools and mechanisms, including the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Guidelines, the Emergency Appeal Guidelines, and the Crisis Categorization Framework, among others, and is supported by a set of Annexes that contain detailed Thematic Guidance.

## B. THE ERF APPROACH

The ERF is guided by the following global and internal approaches, which are relevant to the IFRC network and the Secretariat:

### Approaches Guiding the IFRC ERF

- The Fundamental Principle of Humanity provides the foundation of the IFRC's mandate. The goals of saving lives and reducing human suffering are the driving force behind all the IFRC's activities and are at the core of how it responds to disasters and crises. The IFRC acts at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity, and Universality.
- The **"Do No Harm"** approach guides all of the IFRC's work. The approach takes into account the multiple impacts of emergency response activities on affected people, communities, environments, local contexts, and on its own staff and volunteers, and strives, as far as possible, to avoid causing further harm to any of these elements.
- In line with the localization commitments of the Grand Bargain, all IFRC emergency response actions should be **"as local as possible, as international as necessary"**. In all its work, the IFRC will strive to empower local actors and use local knowledge and expertise to improve the quality of its response.
- The IFRC also **strives to achieve high quality implementation, delivery and accountability by meeting or exceeding accepted global standards** in all its work and in all its internal policies and guidelines, including the Core Humanitarian Standards, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and SPHERE standards.
- **Trust** is fundamental to the IFRC's operations. It underpins the relationships with affected National Societies and fosters solidarity and shared accountability within the IFRC network. The Secretariat is committed to building and maintaining trust to ensure cohesive and effective emergency responses.
- **Safeguarding** is a key aspect of all the IFRC's work and it is the IFRC's responsibility in emergency responses to mitigate violence, exploitation, abuse, harassment or discrimination by Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) personnel towards community members or other RCRC team members. All IFRC emergency responses must adhere to the zero-tolerance policy for sexual misconduct and zero-tolerance for inaction. All staff (including surge) are expected to have signed the IFRCs Code of Conduct.
- The IFRC is committed to global **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)** principles, focusing on environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and strong governance. It minimizes its environmental impact, promotes inclusivity and transparency in community engagement, and ensures accountability and compliance across its global network.
- The IFRC is, by its mandate and constitution, a **membership organization** and the Secretariat is directed to support its membership with preparedness for and

coordination of disaster and crisis response assistance. The IFRC will support both National Societies affected by disasters and crises and those assisting National Societies who are responding.

- The IFRC will always put the **affected National Society/Societies at the centre** of an emergency response. The ERF is in line with all the functions designed under the Seville 2.0 Agreement and with the commitment that the National Society will always be the Convener of a response and the IFRC a co-convener in specific contexts.
- In line with the commitment to localization, the IFRC Secretariat is committed to **decentralized decision-making**, as those located closest to the affected communities are best placed to understand the context, needs, and constraints in the impacted area(s) and should, therefore, be empowered, alongside the relevant National Societies, to make operational decisions.
- In an increasingly complex, global environment, **speed and agility** are key to reducing human suffering and saving lives. In an emergency, the IFRC must be able to adapt to change, in order to remain relevant and effective. It must be able to maintain agile systems to deliver immediate, life-saving humanitarian goods and services and to be able to rapidly deploy resources to support its global membership
- In a world of increasingly scarce resources, **efficiency, effectiveness, and predictability** are vital and the IFRC must demonstrate it can deliver its response activities to affected communities in a timely manner. In line with this, the IFRC must always be accountable to its members, donors, and communities and predictable in the delivery of its response operations
- As a decentralized organization, the IFRC Secretariat and its members must always promote an environment of **collaboration, teamwork, problem solving and knowledge sharing** for effective response. Information and knowledge must be consistently shared through established mechanisms to prevent duplication of efforts and resources. All teams should actively collaborate to address challenges and seize opportunities, ensuring a unified approach to disaster response. Furthermore, learning and innovation are critical to ensure we improve our responses and be the best we can to support communities in need.

## C. IFRC APPROACH TO OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

### IFRC's Overall Response Activation

The IFRC Secretariat engages in continuous monitoring of potential and/or imminent disasters and crises around the world and keeps its systems updated daily. When a disaster or crisis occurs, the Secretariat immediately engages with the National Society of the affected country to determine the scope and scale of the response and to ascertain whether international assistance may be required to provide humanitarian support to affected people. In accordance with the Principles and Rules for Humanitarian Assistance<sup>3</sup>, if the affected National Society does request support to respond, it shall establish a framework to

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ifrc.org/document/principles-rules-humanitarian-assistance>

manage and report on the received assistance with support from the IFRC network if required. In turn once the NS requests assistance, the Secretariat will categorize the disaster or crisis (*see Section D*) and will activate the relevant protocols in the ERF and the related processes, to ensure effective and timely support can be provided.

Throughout this process, the Secretariat will keep IFRC membership informed through established information sharing channels (e.g. the GO platform, internal mechanisms for the Senior Leadership) and will draw on the expertise and resources of its membership to ensure the needs of affected people are met as efficiently and effectively as possible. The Secretariat will also ensure the support of the IFRC membership is coordinated to best meet the needs of both the affected National Society and the communities. The overall process of Secretariat emergency response activation is laid out in the diagram below:

A further element of this overall response activation process is to ensure there are effective coordination and cooperation mechanisms at each level of the process, to coordinate work across the Secretariat and the wider IFRC network. The ERF outlines these coordination processes and mechanisms across all levels (*see Section H and the detailed procedures in Annex 7*).

**Operational Readiness for the Secretariat:** To ensure efficient disaster response, all Country or Country Cluster Delegations (CD/CCDs) will adhere to the Office Readiness [checklist](#)<sup>4</sup>. This checklist outlines essential preparedness actions and procedures, enabling CD/CCDs to respond quickly and effectively to any disaster or crisis. This has two levels:

- **Level 1 (Basic):** Mandatory for all delegations, ensuring a baseline level of preparedness.
- **Level 2 (Advanced):** Applies to delegations in high-risk countries or those with greater capacity. This level includes more advanced preparedness measures.

The IFRC will support CD/CCDs in achieving their required operational readiness level. This initiative complements the ERF by ensuring that delegations are operationally ready to utilize ERF resources and procedures effectively when a disaster strikes.

## ERF Compliance

Senior management is accountable for the implementation of the ERF and for ensuring that all units comply with its requirements. A monitoring process will track compliance, with findings and recommendations reported to management for action. Reviews will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the ERF and identify areas for improvement. Feedback will be collected from all levels of the Secretariat to ensure the ERF remains relevant and responsive to the needs of the organization. Updates and revisions will be made as needed to ensure the ERF remains a dynamic and effective framework for emergency response.

## Risk Management & Risk Appetite

Risk management is the responsibility of the whole organization and needs to be carried out through existing risk management procedures and in line with the [IFRC Risk Management Policy](#). Risk appetite is the nature and extent of the risks that the IFRC is willing to take to achieve its objectives and maximise its humanitarian impact.

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<sup>4</sup> [Office Readiness for the IFRC Secretariat checklist](#)

All emergency response operations entail some level of risk and the work to analyze risk appetite supports decision-makers to make confident decisions about how much risk is acceptable and informs the prioritisation of which risks to manage first. It is a key part of the IFRC's journey to build organisational risk maturity and to ensure it is basing its decisions on solid risk analysis and evidence across all levels of the organization.

**Default risk appetite:** The default risk appetite for emergency response operations is directly linked with the IFRC's National Society Investment Framework (NSIF) dashboard, which captures the overall profile of a National Society and provides details of its foundations, to ensure they comply with the IFRC's policy on risk management and address the seven IFRC risk categories (see [Annex 3](#)). This process is reviewed at least twice annually.

The IFRC's default risk appetite analysis does not set a ceiling for the risk that it is willing to take in each emergency response but decides on a case-by-case basis, based on the operational objectives and operating context in each emergency and the institutional and operational capacities of each affected National Society. Heads of Delegations/Heads of Country Cluster Delegations (HoDs/HoCCDs) can request an exemption from the default risk appetite for specific risk categories for a temporary period, but this must be based on a solid risk analysis of how the context has changed and of the situation or potential actions in relation to the shock. And their HoDs/HoCCDs must produce a clearly outlined plan on how the risk will be managed. Exemptions should be requested by HoDs/HoCCDs through the Regional Director.

**Elevated Risk Appetite in Red-level Disasters and Crises:** The IFRC accepts higher risk levels when it is justified by the severity of the context and the level of the humanitarian needs and objectives. From the outset, Red and Orange-level emergencies operate with an overall elevated risk appetite, due to their scale and complexity, as they are often in contexts characterized by volatility, unpredictability or degrees of insecurity. Red-level emergencies require a higher risk acceptance in specific key risk areas to enable the IFRC to deliver at a greater scale and to respond more quickly and efficiently from the onset of a major disaster or crisis, removing levels of bureaucracy which might hamper the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance in cases of severe or large-scale human suffering<sup>5</sup>. IFRC recognizes it cannot fully eliminate these risks but instead, commits to mitigate them through robust contingency plans, continuous context monitoring and analysis, and clear security mitigation measures<sup>6</sup>. This is consistent with best practices across the humanitarian sector. The elevated risk appetite is guided by the key principles listed in Section B above.

In more specific terms, the IFRC's elevated risk appetite applies to contextual, operational (except security), programme delivery, reputational, fiduciary (fraud, corruption), and strategic risks. At all times, the appetite for safeguarding risk remains low and where IFRC's exposure to it is high, it will mitigate these risks as a priority, including on issues of duty of care. In particular, the appetite is heightened in the following areas of risk:

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<sup>5</sup> See in general Risk Management Policy 2022 which governs risk management at the IFRC.

<sup>6</sup> See [Phase Orange — The IFRC Guide to a Safer Mission](#) and [Phase Red — The IFRC Guide to a Safer Mission](#).

- **Contextual risks:** To effectively respond to a humanitarian disaster, the IFRC is willing to engage in the most complex operating contexts, including places with limited access, susceptible to volatility and experiencing a rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation. The IFRC's priority is to deliver timely and effective aid to those in need, understanding that operating in such conditions may expose it to greater uncertainty and volatility.
- **Operational risks:** The IFRC is committed to simplifying its own internal processes and procedures to be faster and more effective in times of overwhelming need, accepting the higher level of operational risk this may require. It does this in a conscious and balanced manner. This means that areas where rules and processes are simplified are clearly defined and agreed with senior management and will apply for a limited time, and critical controls and safeguards remain.
- **Program delivery risks:** A heightened risk appetite reflects the necessity to sometimes take operational decisions based on limited information in order to fulfill the Principle of Humanity and to deliver immediate assistance to affected communities. The IFRC regards decisions that result in both lower value for money and realistic setbacks as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future. The IFRC does this in a conscious and balanced manner, carefully reviewing the risks in our delivery approaches and investing time and resources to concretely reduce high-risk exposure over time.
- **Reputational Risk:** In the fast-paced and unpredictable realm of emergency response, the potential for negative publicity and challenging public perceptions is heightened. We acknowledge that sometimes the urgency to act swiftly and save lives might lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations in the public eye, which could impact our reputation. We also acknowledge that misinformation and disinformation is increasing, which can also damage the RCRC Movement's reputation, erode stakeholder trust, diminish humanitarian diplomacy, and impact our ability to deliver. The IFRC will implement proactive measures, such as monitoring online discourses, establishing clear communication channels and messages, and developing a robust response plan for addressing false narratives, to mitigate the potential harm caused by this and protect the trust communities place in the Emblem.
- **Fiduciary risks:** To enable swift humanitarian action, we are willing to accept that consistent implementation of high levels of financial controls from the outset is likely to be challenging, due to the context or the capacities of the implementing National Societies. We are willing to engage in areas where we are exposed to fraud risk, where the needs and humanitarian returns justify it.
- **Strategic Risks:** The IFRC is committed to ensuring that its strategies are well-aligned with the needs of those we serve and the expectations of our stakeholders. We accept moderate risks in any misalignment between the response and the strategy.

While the IFRC acknowledges the different levels of risk appetite that it has evaluated and agreed, it's crucial to emphasize that the individuals responsible for those processes and decisions (i.e., the signatories) retain full accountability for the associated risks. This means that even with the simplification of processes under the Immediate Response Protocol (IRP) and the related potential increases in risk, the responsibility and accountability of the signatories are not diminished, but rather heightened.

When it comes to Duty of Care (DoC) risks, commitment to personnel safety and security remains high. The IFRC is realistic about exposure to these risks, but the organization recognizes that where the humanitarian imperative justifies, it may have to accept operating in insecure and volatile conditions. The IFRC is prepared to engage in these contexts and mitigate the risks, by putting in place strong security mitigation measures and escalating potential security incidents swiftly, or by prioritizing procedures to support safeguarding and its DoC. In this, the organization will put in place prevention mechanisms and will draw on support from experts. The IFRC maintains a zero-tolerance approach to inaction or mishandling of cases in these areas, and if safeguarding or fraud/corruption risks crystallize into suspected or proven cases, the IFRC will act in line with its policies and will learn from its experience.

Decisions on risk appetite and on actions for wider areas of risk, especially for Red-level responses, are outlined in the IFRC Risk Policy, but are, in most cases, the responsibility and accountability of the Under-Secretary General National Society Development and Operations Coordination (USG NSDOC) and the Secretary General (for full details see [Annex 3](#) and [IFRC Risk Management Policy](#)).

### **Immediate Response Protocol**

To reflect these adjusted risk appetite levels in emergencies, the IFRC has adopted the Immediate Response Protocol (IRP) [[Annex 4](#)]. Once a crisis has been categorized, the IRP will be activated to enable streamlined processes and procedures for Orange- and Red-level emergency responses, with the aim of fast-tracking more agile and responsive humanitarian operations, in line with the IFRC's commitment to speedy and flexible emergency response whilst maintaining accountability, transparency and quality. The IRP particularly outlines simplified procedures for critical processes within the Secretariat, especially in the areas of Supply Chain Management, Human Resources, Finance, and other management support services. The use of these simplified procedures will enable quicker, more agile responses and timely delivery of services to those impacted by disasters or crises.

IRP is automatically activated in Red and Orange level crises, and deactivated as per the conditions laid out in the IRP guidelines. . The identified risks and levels will be communicated to the relevant National Societies, Secretariat teams and other stakeholders, to inform them of what support and resources are required by the operation. This decision making aligns with the categorization process described below.

## **D. CRISIS CATEGORIZATION PROCESS**

### **The Disaster and Crisis Categorization Analysis and Process**

The IFRC's Disaster and Crisis Categorization Analysis (CCA) enables the Secretariat to use standardized criteria to classify emergencies according to their magnitude, severity and significance for the IFRC network. The categorization process relies on strong data analysis and expert judgment by IFRC management, to rapidly and reliably assess the disaster or crisis and categorize it as one of the three categories described below. After publication of a Field Report by the affected National Society requesting international assistance, the CCA data analysis is completed by the Secretariat's IM team within 24 hours ([Annex 5](#) provides more details on the role of IM in a Red-level response). Once the category has been agreed

with management it triggers the relevant mechanisms and processes to respond to a disaster or crisis of that level in a timely and appropriate manner.

- **Red-level** - the most severe disaster or crisis, requiring the highest level of mobilization and coordination from the IFRC Secretariat, triggering specific scale-up measures (see Section F for more details on a Red-level response)
- **Orange-level** - a disaster or crisis of a lower level of severity than a Red, but either of sufficient scale and severity or with the potential to become larger or more severe, which therefore requires heightened Secretariat vigilance and may trigger enhanced IFRC response measures
- **Yellow Level** - a disaster or crisis of the lowest level of severity, which is responded to with standard Secretariat response tools and processes

The IFRC's CCA uses a combination of primary and secondary data to evaluate the crisis level and works in line with five categories outlined in the IFRC's Needs Analysis Framework: Pre-crisis vulnerability; operational constraints; scope and scale; humanitarian conditions; and response capacity. These criteria are weighted and provide an overall picture of the scale and potential impact of the disaster or crisis and of the IFRC network's capacities to respond. The table below outlines the main elements that guide the categorization analysis and process and the different conditions that may apply to each disaster or crisis (see [Annex 11](#)) for details of the categorization process, criteria and scoring tool). The categorization method given in this section applies to all types of disasters or crises, including public health, slow onset, and other complex crises.

CCA	Crises/Disasters	Public Health Emergencies
<b>Red</b>	<p>A large-scale disaster affecting a large area of a country or countries. A very large number of people are affected (more than 2M) and more than 500,000 people are in need<sup>7</sup>. The crisis often occurs in areas of high complexity and where there is a high level of sustained, global media attention.</p> <p>An IFRC Red declaration can be made for both sudden and slow-onset emergencies or complex and protracted crises.</p> <p>A Red emergency categorization triggers a higher level of ambition to respond to the humanitarian situation and a higher risk appetite from the IFRC and requires specific protocols and mechanisms to be triggered.</p>	<p>Responds to a localized, regional, or global outbreak of infectious disease or other health risk with a high number of people affected or at risk, very high potential public health consequences, or where the underlying population's health or health system vulnerabilities, and other humanitarian needs or contextual factors, increase the severity of the outbreak's potential health and humanitarian consequences. The crisis often occurs in areas of high complexity and where there is a high level of sustained, global media attention.</p>

<sup>7</sup> There is a difference between the "people affected" by a disaster, which includes all people impacted by the disaster and those "in need of assistance", who have been assessed as the most vulnerable and most urgently in need of assistance, include from the IFRC network

<b>Orange</b>	<p>A widespread crisis or disaster with a significant portion of a country or countries affected. Many people are affected (between 500k and 2M) and between 100 – 500k people are in need.</p> <p>An IFRC Orange declaration can be made for both sudden and slow-onset emergencies, and complex or protracted crises.</p> <p>It also often occurs in areas with a high degree of complexity and more national or regional media attention, and possibly brief global media coverage.</p>	<p>Responds to a localized or regional epidemic of an infectious disease or other health risk, with a moderate number of people affected or at risk and with medium to high potential public health consequences. This could occur in a non-endemic area or an area where the National Society, government and health system have limited experience or technical capacity to respond, or where the underlying population's health or health system vulnerabilities, other humanitarian needs, or contextual factors increase the severity of the outbreak's health and humanitarian consequences.</p> <p>It also often occurs in areas with a high degree of complexity and with more national or regional media attention, and possible brief global media coverage.</p>
<b>Yellow</b>	<p>A crisis or disaster with a relatively narrow geographical scope, affecting a particular province or region of a country, with a relatively low number of affected people (fewer than 500k) and with fewer than 100k people in need.</p> <p>An IFRC Yellow declaration can be made for both sudden and slow-onset emergencies.</p> <p>The disaster or crisis will receive limited regional and/or international media attention.</p>	<p>A localized outbreak of an infectious disease or other health risk with a small number of people affected or at risk, and medium public health consequences. Or an outbreak or health risk in an endemic area where the National Society, government and health system have the experience and technical capacity to respond to this type of outbreak and where the underlying population's health vulnerabilities do not increase the severity of the outbreak's potential health and humanitarian consequences.</p>

### **Roles, responsibilities & decision-making for the categorization process**

The CCA process is based on initial assessments carried out by the IFRC's IM analysts in the first hours of a disaster or crisis or when evaluating the status of an ongoing or protracted crisis. The IM teams work in close consultation with the Operations Management teams, and with the Emergency Health teams on the categorization of public health emergencies, and also in consultation with HoDs/HoCCDs. If further technical capacity or support is needed for the analysis, this can be accessed from other Regional Offices (ROs) or Headquarters. Once classified, the Secretariat will notify all staff, IFRC membership, and the Movement of the categorization via the GO Platform and other relevant channels. The first crisis categorization analysis should be determined within 24 hours of the event or trigger.

### **Specific Steps for the Categorization for Red-level Emergencies**

Unlike an Orange or Yellow categorization, a Red-level categorization requires validation by the Regional Director and must be agreed by the USG NSDOC and endorsed by the

Secretary General. If a Red-level categorization has been agreed, a Red Emergency Declaration will be made and the decision communicated to all Secretariat staff by the DCC Director in collaboration with the Director of Health and Care (for health emergencies).

### The Duration of a Crisis Categorization

All crisis categorizations will be reviewed if there are significant changes in the humanitarian context or when there is a revision of the Operational Strategy. A Red-level emergency is declared for three months and can be extended for an additional three months if confirmed by a crisis categorization update (to a maximum of six months). If it is required to continue, it can be agreed to move to an Orange-level response. An Orange-level can also be declared for three months and extended for longer, depending on the needs. The extension of a Red- or Orange-level response must be informed by updated analysis and the extension decided and approved by the Management Cell (comprising of the Under-Secretary General for NSDOC; Directors of DCC, Health & Care, Finance and Administration, NSD Services, HD&Comms, Global Humanitarian Services and Supply Chain, Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilization and HR; and Global Security and DREF, IM & Quality delivery Heads). If a crisis categorization needs to be scaled down, this will be recommended by the Regional Director and agreed with the Director of Disasters, Climate and Crises (DCC), in collaboration with the Director of Health and Care (for public health emergencies).

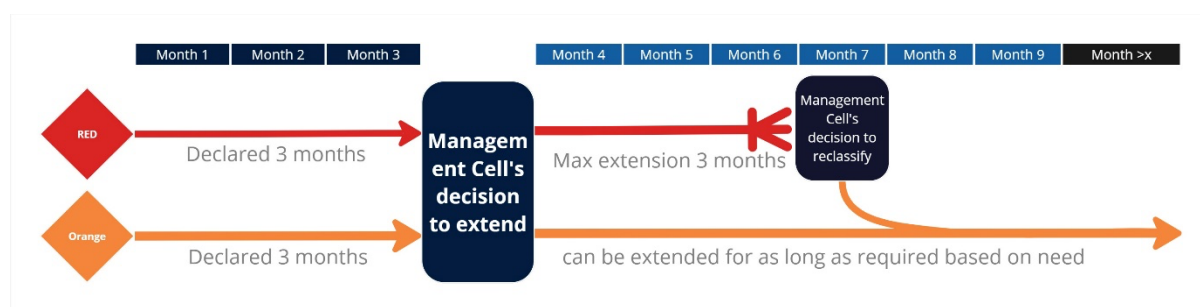


Figure 2: Figure showing the duration of a Crisis Categorization of Red and Orange

## E. SECRETARIAT-WIDE SUPPORT FOR OPERATIONS

### Secretariat-Wide Support to Different Categories of Crises

The ERF provides the architecture to respond to each categorization of a disaster or crisis. Each unit or department of the Secretariat has critical activities it must deliver for a successful emergency response; however, these vary depending on the severity of the crisis.

As One Global Team with strengthened accountability, dual matrix management will be applied with two distinct 'lines' of accountability. A red line that covers functions that follow consistent global rules and ensures we follow the same standards everywhere. A blue line that covers functions adapted to local needs. These teams will report to their regional management first, ensuring operational decisions are made close to the ground while global directors ensure global coherence, quality assurance, and maintain technical standards. An annex with detailed information on the dual-matrix management model will be added once it has been developed by HR.

The table below shows the main responsibilities and deliverables for each unit or department for each disaster or crisis category.

It is expected that these deliverables are developed mainly at country level, with the support of Headquarters<sup>8</sup>, who will be responsible for ensuring that these deliverables are put in place in a timely manner. The relevant departments will also be accountable to ensure the appropriate support is provided to guarantee the deliverables outlined below.

In each instance, the table outlines if these actions are:

- **Mandatory:** A non-negotiable output, which must be delivered
- **Case by Case:** A key deliverable that should be considered and agreed if it is required for that specific operation
- **Recommended:** An optional output, which is advised but not mandatory
- **NA:** Not applicable

For a Red-level categorization, the humanitarian imperative demands swift action. To avoid bureaucratic delays, an Emergency Coordinator is appointed for the operation and assumes the ultimate decision-making authority. This streamlined approach appointment will ensure efficient operational management in accordance with the ERF.

Also, due to the humanitarian imperative and “no regrets” approach for a Red-level response, the IFRC’s reputational risks and minimum standards must be more agile during the response. Each unit or department is also responsible for producing and regularly updating their own SOPs to ensure their agility and effectiveness. This is mandatory. More detailed guidelines (that are not mandatory), will be advised on a case-by-case basis, to set out the full range of actions that each unit or department must apply for each of the crisis categories (see [Annex 1](#) and [Annex 2](#) for more detailed information on these responsibilities, deliverables etc.). It should also be noted that the legal and regulatory frameworks applying to international assistance in the country of the declared emergency must be taken into consideration.

### Key deliverables to be in place by units / departments for each category of disaster

Unit	Key deliverables	Red	Orange	Yellow
Operations Coordination and Management	Deliver DREF, EA, Operational Strategy, implementation plan (ERP WBS), including a procurement plan (Operational Cockpit)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Ensure operational needs planning and procurement planning are developed within a few days of the Ops strategy, and are discussed and coordinated with supply chain management	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Ensure all required documents as per the approved <a href="#">MSR</a> are developed.	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Agree Movement/Membership coordination planning	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Set up workforce planning (short, medium, long term)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended

<sup>8</sup> Following the Renewal and the One Secretariat approach, *Headquarters* refers to both Regional Offices and Geneva.

Unit	Key deliverables	Red	Orange	Yellow
	Set up and lead the operational coordination mechanism (for each relevant section)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Ensure the Early Warning Tracking System (EWTS) for operations is utilised	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Coordinate the Emergency and Recovery Needs Assessment	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Organize a recovery conference for sudden onset red level emergencies 3 months after the EA launch, based on the recovery assessment and the subsequent recovery plan developed.	Mandatory	Recommended	N/A
<b>Surge</b>	Lead Surge team support for Rapid Response, Standby list, and ERUs from requests through to mobilization, including alerts, selection, deployment, and mission support / closing. Coordinate with membership and deploying NS when ERUs are requested.	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Establish and regularly update the health strategy and activities in the operational plan	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
<b>Emergency Health</b>	Develop Health Workforce Planning (short, medium, long term)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Proactively engage with NS health teams to co-create health strategies and plans in PHE	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Coordinate the Emergency Health Needs Assessment and/or Epidemic Risk Analysis	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Planning > Develop and maintain an implementation plan and survey feedback loops	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
<b>Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation &amp; Reporting</b>	Monitoring > DREF & EA; develop and maintain M&E and reporting frameworks, incl. an M&E plan; Set up Indicator Tracking Table (ITT) and Reporting Schedule, to collect reliable and timely monitoring data and ensure timely reporting	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Evaluation/Review > Within 4 weeks, set up a Rapid Operational Check-in (ROC) (see Annex 14) Within 10 weeks of launching the Real Time Evaluation (RTE) <sup>9</sup> , revise and submit the final evaluation report.	Mandatory	Case by Case	N/A
	Reporting >	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory

<sup>9</sup> [IFRC Real time Evaluation Guidelines](#)

Unit	Key deliverables	Red	Orange	Yellow
	a) External: Publish DREF/EA updates and a Final Report as per DREF/EA guidelines			
	b) Internal: Issue IFRC Situation Reports (SitReps) according to agreed frequency	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	c) Submit donor reports	Mandator	Mandatory	Mandatory
	d) Meet minimum expectations for Fed-wide financial and indicator tracking reporting	Mandatory	Mandatory	N/A
	Assess the supply chain situation Design the supply chain response planning and human resources requirements	Mandatory	Mandatory (standard policy)	Mandatory (standard policy)
<b>Supply Chain Management</b>	Develop and publish a Mobilisation Table with procurement specifications from the Operations Implementation Plan	Mandatory	Case by Case	N/A
	Conduct sourcing, procurement, transport, fleet management, customs clearance (with NS), warehousing and inventory control	Mandatory	Mandatory (standard policy)	Mandatory (standard policy)
	Develop Supply Chain/Fleet Plan	Mandatory	Recommend	N/A
<b>Human Resources</b>	Manage the safe recruitment, screening, vetting, contracting, onboarding, and briefing of personnel.	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Support workforce planning, safeguarding and staff well-being	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Ensure HR capacity-building and development planning for affected NS	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
<b>Finance</b>	Set up PEAR (for EAs)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Support development and validation of Operating Budget	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Support cash flow needs to ensure timely delivery	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
<b>Admin</b>	Arrange travel/visas, welcome services and housing for deployed personnel	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
<b>ITD</b>	Provide and maintain IT infrastructure and services, keeping them operational all the time	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Ensure IFRC staff are equipped with the required IT hardware and knowledge to ensure their daily productivity	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Ensure the IT Business continuity plan is set up, tested and communicated to staff (incl. VSAT, power banks, power generators, remote access, etc.)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended

Unit	Key deliverables	Red	Orange	Yellow
	Update IT risk register and ensure mitigation measures are set up	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	In coordination with Security Unit, and as required, ensure delegation key positions are equipped with alternative communication tools to ensure staff safety (satellite phones, VHF Radios, etc.)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Provide IT stock for immediate dispatch during the operational response	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Ensure IT supply chain and framework agreements are set up to have market accessibility	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
Security <sup>10</sup>	Support country teams to ensure compliance with security guidance	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	<b>Country with Orange/Red security phase:</b> Carry out the security assessment and produce/revise the MSR	Mandatory	Case by Case	Case by Case
	<b>Country with Orange / Red security phase:</b> Identify appropriate resourcing for long term security provision	Mandatory	Case by Case	Case by Case
Information Management	Produce all required IM products, including Fed-wide products	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
	Disaster Briefs, for EA.	Mandatory	Mandatory	N/A
	Develop IM IFRC Disaster Snapshot	Mandatory	Recommended	N/A
	Maintain IM Emergency Dashboards	Mandatory	Recommended	N/A
	Coordinate SIMS Activation	Mandatory	Recommended	N/A
	Support Emergency Needs Assessment	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Legal	<b>For countries without legal status:</b> Advise on implications, risks and mitigation measures	Mandatory	Recommend	Recommended
	<b>For countries without legal status:</b> Guide dialogue with host Government on request for status agreement	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Ensure adequate counsel on local and international legislation (incl. data protection)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
Humanitarian Diplomacy	Identify key issues/challenges requiring HD interventions	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Develop key messages to illustrate these challenges and to position NS and the network	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Coordinate with ICRC on messages and engagement strategy and tactics according to Seville 2.0	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended

<sup>10</sup> Security [Annex 6](#) provides more details on role of security in red and orange level emergencies

Unit	Key deliverables	Red	Orange	Yellow
	Develop a stakeholder mapping analysis	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Develop a plan for local, regional, and global engagement	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
Disaster Law	Provide analysis and fact sheets on the legal and regulatory frameworks in place for humanitarian access and to address legal barriers. Advise on legal restrictions / implications	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Develop official communication with the authorities using the disaster law surge kit	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Discuss and draw up evidenced-based advocacy for authorities to agree clear legal status for the NS	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
Strategic Partnerships & Resource Mobilization	Develop a resource mobilization plan, incl. partner calls	Mandatory	Mandatory	N/A
	Draw up official communication with donors / partners on the EA	Mandatory	Mandatory	N/A
	Ensure pledge management (incl. earmarking)	Mandatory	Mandatory	N/A
	Develop grant proposals (with sector leads)	Mandatory	Mandatory	N/A
Comms	Appoint in-country spokespersons (IFRC or HNS)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Develop a communications strategy	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Appoint / deploy an advanced Comms team, including a media specialist and a content specialist	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
	Deliver all Comms outputs listed in the list of deliverables (Annex to the Emergency Comms SOPs)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
	Set up mechanisms for MHD issues (when relevant)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended
Risk Management	Set up risk management plan and risk register, incl. safeguarding and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) risks	Mandatory	Mandatory	Recommended

### Secretariat-wide support for essential functions during Red-level Crises

Red-level disasters/crises are the largest and most complex emergencies supported by the IFRC. To sharpen our humanitarian focus, influence and impact<sup>11</sup>, the Secretariat needs to reinforce the emergency response system with a 24/7 approach, ensuring the IFRC Network is always ready to act. Support from all layers, locations and sectors of the IFRC Secretariat will be needed, requiring, in some cases, a reorientation of work to support the overwhelming scale of humanitarian needs. During a Red-level disaster/crisis, there will be an always ready “One Secretariat” approach and a move to more streamlined processes across all management levels and services. DCC Geneva will prepare a document outlining this approach to be annexed to the ERF.

<sup>11</sup> [IFRC Renewal](#). The Strategic Reorientation of the IFRC.

The points below outline the additional functions/actions that can be triggered for a Red-level response and some Orange-level responses.

- As noted above, the **Immediate Response Protocol (IRP)** will be automatically activated upon categorization of an Orange and Red-level response and will be active for up to 180 days.
- The declaration of a Red-level disaster/crisis should be followed by an analysis to ensure that the minimum capacities are present in-country to support the operation. If these capacities are not present or insufficient in-country, the IFRC will prioritize the deployment of **specific key functions to form a minimum in-country operations team** for an initial three-month period. These functions should include; Systematic: Head of Delegation (when non-existent), Operations Manager or HEOps, Finance Coordinator, Supply Chain Coordinator, and Health Coordinator in a health emergency. Systematic but can be excluded with USG approval: Administration Officer, PMER Coordinator, HR Coordinator, IM Coordinator, SPRM Coordinator, SIMS Activation. For health emergencies, systematic deployment of public health analyst, instead of assessment coordinator. These agreed priority functions can be filled from within the CD/CCD and RO or deployed through the Global Surge system and should be in-country as quickly as possible, ideally deploying together as a team. The RD is accountable for ensuring that this is in place for Red-level responses. An HoD/HoCCD would have to justify the non-inclusion of any of these deployment profiles. These priority functions do not minimize the importance of other surge roles<sup>12</sup> that might be assessed as needed, depending on the context.
- In addition, the IFRC has established a **“Stand by list” for short, Rapid Response deployments from within the IFRC Secretariat** (ForeSEE decision HR3, 2022), to supplement existing Surge profiles in corporate services and management support functions, where in-depth knowledge of IFRC procedures and systems is required. Activation of the Stand by list requires pre-identified staff to be deployed or assigned to prioritize their time for a Red-level or some Orange-level disasters/crises, instead of working on their other tasks. It is essential to keep this Stand by list active and managers must maintain a list of staff willing and ready to deploy for one to three months or to provide remote support. In accordance with the principle of localized deployment, priority should be given to suitable profiles at the Country, Cluster or Regional levels and the Stand by function can also be used to backfill those deployed local/regional positions.
- For every Red-level disaster/crisis, there might be a need for **remote Secretariat support** including over weekends, following the always-ready 24/7 approach<sup>13</sup>. All necessary teams and functions will **be assigned a focal point(s) for the operation, at Headquarters level**. These people will dedicate time to support the operation, follow up on any urgent requests, and ensure the operation benefits from the right level of technical support. Focal points will also arrange a roster of staff to ensure the continuity of the “on call function” for each service or function for every weekend for the first month of the response, at Headquarters level - beyond this period, the support would be dependent on requirements.

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<sup>12</sup> Please refer to the Surge role profiles here: [Surge \(ifrc.org\)](https://www.ifrc.org/en/about-ifrc/roles-and-functions/surge)

<sup>13</sup> [IFRC Renewal](#). The Strategic Reorientation of the IFRC.

## F. LEADERSHIP – ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, DECISION- MAKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Overarching Roles and Responsibilities

The section below describes the key roles and responsibilities at each of the different levels of the IFRC Secretariat during an emergency response. These roles and responsibilities are applicable before, during, and after an emergency response, but the ERF focuses on the response itself (see [Annex 1](#) for a detailed list of roles & responsibilities).

**National Societies** are the lead actors (Convenors) responding to emergencies within their territories, in line with their mandates. Within the Movement they have the responsibility to perform according to the Movement Statutes and normative tools (Seville 2.0 (Article 5): Movement Coordination in Operational Situations: Organization). The ERF, however, focuses on the role of the Secretariat (or Co-Convenor as defined in Seville 2.0, Article 5.4) and therefore this document does not cover the roles of the National Societies. In instances where there is no IFRC delegation or “local” capacity available to take on the key roles or responsibilities for relevant technical and managerial support to the responding NS at country, cluster or regional levels, then the next “most local” Secretariat level will assume those responsibilities and will ensure those critical functions are fulfilled, to support the quality of the response.

**Country Delegations/Country Cluster Delegations (CDs/CCDs)** are the nearest Secretariat offices to the affected areas and therefore take the primary role in supporting National Societies in strategic, operational and response capacity strengthening matters. They take on the Co-convenor role, in situations that align with this role as set out in Seville 2.0, helping the National Society to set the direction for the operation, establish the necessary coordination platforms for Membership and Movement Coordination, and enable conditions for an agile response during the first hours/days of an emergency. They support the operational integrity and request global and international support, through the IFRC system, as necessary. They also provide technical, programmatic, and fundraising guidance and support National Societies to deliver quality assurance at all times and support monitoring and learning, to inform decision-making.

CDs are overall responsible and accountable for the IFRC operational support to National Societies responding to shocks in their own country, including for the management of financial resources, workforce planning, and operational delivery. When they do not have the capacities to fulfill this role, HoDs are responsible to request ROs to take this on as a temporary role.

**Regional Offices (ROs)** coordinate international support for all operations in their region, including managing or coordinating requests for regional Surge capacity. They provide the first level of quality assurance and retain overall accountability for operational quality, and for technical and managerial human resources (including backfilling) for CDs/CCDs that require support. ROs provide the links between the affected country/countries and Geneva, sharing relevant information, analysis, strategies and policies between the two and providing overarching coordination and strategic guidance.

When the HoCD/HoCCD request the RO to take over the operation, it is expected that the RO will have the capacity to assume such a role. However, If the RO is overstretched with

several operations or other priorities at the same time, it is the responsibility of the Regional Director to request Geneva to assume the operations.

**IFRC Headquarters** maintains a strategic overview of the response and ensures overall compliance with IFRC and interagency global protocols, guidelines, and procedures, and adherence to technical quality standards. The Headquarters activates global tools and deploys global Surge capacity, as well as providing technical expertise and backfilling to the ROs and CDs/CCDs as necessary. The Headquarters also sets, disseminates and monitors minimum standards, technical quality assurance, and facilitates learning across the Secretariat.

The Headquarters could assume responsibility for operations in extraordinary circumstances (the process for this will be Outlined in an Annex to be developed). This will require a decision of the IFRC Secretary General and will be based upon advice from the Senior Leadership in Geneva and the respective Regional Directors. The principle will remain that the closest IFRC Office to the operational context should be responsible and accountable to accompany a National Society wherever possible.

### **Prioritizing the Decentralized Leadership and Decision-making Model**

The IFRC aims to place decision-making authority as close as possible to the affected area and to simplify decision-making processes to maintain that local proximity with stronger accountability. This means that the leadership at CD / CCD levels are empowered to make decisions during an emergency operation, working collaboratively with National Societies and placing communities at the center, as they have the best understanding of the capacities and priorities of the National Society leading the response, the local operating environment, and the inherent risks. HoDs / HoCCDs and Operations Leads are empowered to authorize decisions and to take on an elevated risk appetite (as outlined in *Annex 3*) and country/cluster heads or leads assume overall accountability for their geographical area.

The IFRC Secretary General also delegates overall accountability for all IFRC activities in the region to the Regional Director, including for the quality of emergency operations. As ROs have overall accountability for the quality of emergency operations, there will be a regular engagement between leadership at country, country cluster and regional levels to discuss key decisions and country/cluster leads can expect guidance, support, validation and other support from their regional structure to ensure quality operations.

The leadership in Geneva should only be included in decision-making on critical issues with a high level of strategic importance, complexity, or reputational risks. This mostly arises during a Red-level or in some Orange-level responses. The table below illustrates the levels of decision-making and the key leadership positions within the IFRC Secretariat that are responsible for those decisions, divided according to Strategic, Operational, and Technical areas.

#### **Disaster in a single country or multiple countries under the same Country Cluster:**

- **Country Level:** The HoD / HoCCD leads and is accountable for the emergency response
- **Regional Level:** The RD (or their designated Deputy RD) oversees and directs the response
- **Early Recovery:** The Deputy RD (or their designated HDCC structure) oversees and directs early recovery efforts

## Overarching Responsibility Level for Management Functions

	GENEVA	REGION	COUNTRY/ CLUSTER
<b>STRATEGIC</b> <sup>14</sup> <i>Long-term planning and decision-making to set overall goals and priorities for emergency response</i>	Secretary General & OSG All USGs	Regional Director	Head of Delegation
<b>OPERATIONAL</b> <i>Managing and coordinating resources and activities to implement strategic plans during an emergency</i>	Director of Disasters, Climate & Crises, in collaboration with the Director of Health and Care (for PHE) (has both strategic and operational roles) Other Geneva Directors	Deputy Regional Director (has both strategic and operational roles)	Operational leadership (has both strategic and operational roles)
	Manager Operations Coordination, in collaboration with the Lead Emergency Health (for PHE).	Head of Disasters, Climate & Crises	
<b>TACTICAL</b> <i>Immediate, short-term actions to address specific needs and challenges during an emergency</i>	Operations Coordinator, in collaboration with the Emergency Health focal point (for PHE).	Operations Coordinator. in collaboration with Emergency Health focal point (for PHE).	Ops functions (project managers, field coordinators, programme coordinators, emergency health coordinator etc.)

## Specific Country, Regional and Global Emergency Response Leadership Functions

Responding to emergencies requires timely, predictable, and accountable leadership and clear decision-making responsibilities across country, regional, and global levels. During an emergency response there are certain functions that are critical to the leadership and decision-making processes of an operation. The table below outlines the core Leadership Responsibilities (R) for specific tasks assigned to various functions and Accountabilities (A) for the outcomes of these tasks, across leadership positions at country/cluster and Headquarters levels. The details of the responsibilities per function are presented in annexes (see [Annex 1](#) for *Specific Guidance on Leadership Responsibilities and Decision-making and ToRs per function on roles and responsibilities*):

### Definitions:

**(R) Responsible** - The Responsible role refers to the individual or team who does the work to complete a task or deliverable. They are the "doers" who execute the task and are responsible for its completion

**(A) Accountable** - The Accountable role is the individual who is ultimately answerable for the successful completion of a task or deliverable. They are the "owners" of the task and have the final say on decisions. Think of the Accountable person as the one who has the authority to

<sup>14</sup> Please refer to the [Annex 12](#) to access the key references with definitions

*delegate the work, approve the outputs, and is held responsible for the overall success or failure of the task.*

<b>COUNTRY/COUNTRY CLUSTER LEVEL</b>	
<b>HEAD OF DELEGATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Approve workforce plan</li> <li>(A) Ensure regular creation and distribution of internal emergency sitreps according to standard timeline to be shared in relevant Secretariat coordination mechanisms.</li> <li>(R) Ensure the implementation of a Mini-Summit to set the strategic direction of the operation</li> <li>(R) Lead on building trusted relationship with NS and provide consistent support to NS</li> <li>(R) Lead on strategic decision-making for the response with the NS</li> <li>(R) Ensure the adequate and timely operational capacities of the IFRC for an effective response</li> <li>(R) Put in place an IFRC spokesperson and take responsibility for providing guidance and managing reputational risks that could involve the IFRC or host NS</li> <li>(R) Act as the Appeal Manager</li> <li>(R) Carry out strategic Movement/Membership coordination and donor engagement</li> <li>(R) Represent the IFRC in strategic interagency fora (non-programmatic and non-technical) and lead the IFRC's external engagement</li> <li>(R) Oversee all long-term programs, operations, NSPs and NSD activities, ensuring effective emergency operations transition to recovery, including the organization of a recovery conference for red level emergencies</li> <li>(R) Ensure safety and security for all those under the IFRC's Duty of Care in country</li> <li>(R) Put in place a clear Risk Management plan (including risk analysis and consideration of safeguarding risks) and agree the frequency of risk reviews with Ops leads (for both internal and external risks)</li> <li>(R) Obtain approval for deviations from default risk appetite, where necessary and escalating risks outside of appetite to RD.</li> <li>(R) Map the safeguarding referral pathways in the response and safely escalate concerns to the Integrity Line</li> <li>(R) Represent the IFRC in internal and external engagement at a high-level and in specific forums and dialogues</li> <li>(R) Liaise with relevant authorities</li> <li>(R) Review the CCA before approval and make recommendations for increased classification if required.</li> </ul>

**OPS  
LEADERSHIP**

- (R) Lead operational support to the NS, based on the operational directions and objectives set by the NS, and initiate the mobilization of all relevant Secretariat support, in agreement with the HoD
- (R) Design operations with the NS and lead operational decision-making for the Secretariat elements of the response
- (R) Draft the workforce plan
- (R) Oversee quality assurance for operational implementation (including for programmatic, technical, and risk elements)
- (R) Project Manager and act as the Budget Holder for the EA and/or DREF, under the decision of the HoD, who holds the overall responsibility for the funding allocations
- (R) Support and ensure enabling conditions for effective Movement / Membership coordination at operational level
- (R) Carry out Movement/Membership coordination at operational level
- (R) Represent the IFRC at operational level interagency fora and lead the IFRC's external engagement for the operation
- (R) Advise on the operational external key messages and define communication red lines
- (R) Provide regular and timely information on risk analysis and risk management to the wider team and the HoD and make regular reviews of the risk register
- (R) Develop and agree the Supply Chain Plan (and Procurement Plan) in consultation with Supply Chain Management

**REGIONAL LEVEL****HEAD OF DCC**

- (A) Ensure provision of effective operations coordination (through various fora) at regional level and technical support to the country operation
- (A) Facilitate troubleshooting and solutions for operational bottlenecks at regional level
- (A) Ensure compliance with global policies, guidelines and technical standards
- (A) Ensure coordination, involvement and communication with Supply Chain Management
- (A) Ensure quality delivery of the operations
- (A) Ensure timely assessment for early recovery and a well-planned transition to recovery programming
- (R) Ensure adequate technical support to ensure the agility, quality, timeliness and effectiveness of the operation, including monitoring and timely actions to address operational needs.
- (R) Capture lessons learned from reviews and evaluations and apply to this and future operations.
- (R) Validate DREF requests, Emergency Appeals and the Operational Strategy & implementation plan
- (R) Carry out Membership Coordination at a regional level
- (R) Draft funding allocation proposals for multi-country or multi-regional crises, unless a separate allocation committee is designated for this task.
- (A) Ensure the developed Supply Chain & Procurement Plans are completed and agreed with Supply Chain Management

**DEPUTY  
REGIONAL  
DIRECTOR**

- (R) Ensure adequate regional support services, incl. PMER, SCM, SPRM, Finance, etc.
- (R) Keep an overview and foresight on the financial status and impact of the operation
- (R) Lead Membership Coordination for early recovery at regional level and ensure the provision of Membership services
- (R) Provide strategic guidance and leadership on the Recovery conference for sudden onset Red Level emergencies, based on the recovery assessment and the subsequent recovery plan developed.
- (R) Facilitate strategic troubleshooting and solutions to bottlenecks with the RD

**REGIONAL  
DIRECTOR**

- (A) Set the broader strategic direction and continuity of the response
- (A) Oversee the quality of the ongoing response
- (A) Hold financial accountability for the EA
- (A) Assure effective management of risks to the emergency response and the escalation of strategic risks outside the risk appetite to HQ
- (R) Maintain strategic relations with the NSs and intervene in cases of operational blockages, significant difficulties with the NSs, governance issues etc.
- (R) Ensure an adequate strategic leadership set-up in-country for response
- (R) Represent IFRC in internal and external engagement at a high level and in specific forums and dialogues
- (R) Ensure strategic engagement with relevant ambassadors to inform them of the work of the IFRC and the operating NS
- (R) Ensure mis/disinformation and hate speech are handled and responded to.
- (R) Approve the funding allocation proposal for multi-country or multi-region crises

**GENEVA LEVEL****MANAGER  
OPERATIONS  
COORDINATION**

- (A) Ensure timely action to have Surge teams in place or on standby, with the competencies required for the different roles
- (A) Ensure global accountability for the quality of the humanitarian response of the IFRC, including organizing regular quality assessments of the humanitarian needs and response priorities
- (A) Ensure timely information for the entire system and verification of the quality of the data used for decision making
- (A) Use the IFRC NSIF dashboard as a critical instrument to guide the HoD and the RD on the institutional challenges and opportunities for the operation
- (A) Ensure the developed Supply Chain Plan (and Procurement Plan) is completed and agreed with Supply Chain Management and agree regular updates to the plan with Supply Chain Management
- (R) Lead global operational membership coordination delivery for the IFRC Secretariat, ensuring coordination and engagement with different stakeholders from within the Membership, Movement or external partner
- (R) Validate the Operations Strategy for Red-level emergencies
- (R) Provide strategic direction for the operations to the HDCC in the RO
- (R) Support the early recovery process as early as possible and ensure the speedy mobilization of assessment teams

**DCC DIRECTOR**

- (A) Identify, elevate and facilitate troubleshooting and propose solutions for operational bottlenecks
- (A) Ensure alignment with global policies, guidelines and technical standards
- (A) Ensure adequate Movement and Membership coordination, information sharing and adequate use of the resources
- (A) Ensure timely and quality operational delivery and that appropriate escalation steps are taken when required
- (R) Advise the RD and the HoD of the affected country, on alternative operational and strategic direction to respond to a disaster, e.g. in preparation for the Mini Summit, or a Recovery Conference for sudden onset red level crises
- (R) Ensure quality advice is given to IFRC Senior Management & the Leadership Team on matters related to the IFRC operation
- (R) Represent IFRC in GVA based inter-agency forums and diplomatic meetings as required
- (A) Oversight on escalation regarding Standby list in case of lack of candidates.

**HEALTH  
DIRECTOR**  
*(IN CASE OF A  
HEALTH  
EMERGENCY)*

- (A) Identify, elevate and facilitate troubleshooting and propose solutions for health-related operational bottlenecks
- (A) Ensure alignment with global health policies, guidelines and technical standards
- (A) Ensure adequate Movement and Membership technical health coordination, information sharing and adequate use of resources
- (A) Ensure effective and sufficient emergency health capacity is dedicated to the responding country office, including by identifying "next local level" support to the operation
- (A) Ensure timely and quality operational delivery of health services and that appropriate escalation steps are taken when required
- (R) In collaboration with the Director of DCC propose the strategic direction to respond to a health emergencies, including for: funding ask requirements; the Health and Care set up in the RO and GVA; the Operational Strategy and main priorities related to health; Membership and Movement coordination related to health; strategic coordination, risk analysis and business continuity to inform programming and engagement with external actors for health recovery and long-term planning post emergency
- (R) Represent the IFRC at the global level, especially in health-related fora and with health partners, as required
- (R) Advise the RD and the HoD of the affected country, on alternative operational and strategic direction to respond to a public health emergency, e.g. in preparation for the Mini Summit
- (R) Ensure quality advice is given to IFRC Senior Management & the Leadership Team on matters related to public health emergency response, including epidemic risk analysis

**ALL DIRECTORS**

- (A) Ensure that the deliverables requested (per department) in each type of emergency are produced as per the table above
- (A) Ensure the appropriate level of support to the operations, especially by ensuring that Surge needs are filled by relevant and experienced personnel
- (R) Propose strategic and organizational solutions to operations bottlenecks identified in the relevant area of work
- (A) Identifying candidates for Standby List in case of escalation/ lack of candidacy in their individual units.

<b>UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL</b> <b>(APPLIES TO ALL USGS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Ensure adequate strategic leadership is set-up at country level for each response (when no EC is appointed)</li> <li>(A) Ensure strategic engagement with external partners at global level</li> <li>(A) Ensure compliance of operations in line with IFRC procedures &amp; the ERF</li> <li>(R) Lead global humanitarian diplomacy efforts to ensure fast and principled humanitarian responses</li> <li>(R) Ensure adequate global support from the IFRC Secretariat and escalate matters with other divisions to resolve issues and guarantee timely support</li> </ul>
<b>EMERGENCY COORDINATOR</b> <b>(IN CASE OF RED CRISES/ DISASTERS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Ensure adequate strategic leadership is set up in country and in the region for the response (including key support and enabling functions)</li> <li>(R) Escalate and identify solutions for strategic bottlenecks for the delivery of the operation</li> <li>(R) Ensure high-level diplomacy/advocacy with NS leadership/governance, especially for important issues restraining the impact of the operation</li> <li>(R) Provide high-level diplomacy/advocacy with donors and partners on resource mobilization and other strategic elements impacting the response</li> <li>(R) Make ultimate decisions to ensure agile and quick delivery in Red-level emergencies</li> </ul>
<b>UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL NSDOC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Ensure adequate implementation of the Seville Agreement 2.0; the Principles and Rules for Humanitarian Assistance; Safeguarding measures and Duty of Care measures for the operations; and the strategic leadership set-up in country for response (when no EC is appointed)</li> <li>(A) Ensure Strategic engagement with external partners at global level</li> <li>(A) Ensure compliance of operations with the IFRC's procedures &amp; ERF</li> <li>(A) As part of the Management cell ensure discussions and direction on the risk appetite for the operation, based on analysis from the NSIF dashboard.</li> <li>(R) Lead global coordination coherence through engagement with the HoDs and RDs on strategic issues requiring global alignment, troubleshooting on unresolved issues, and humanitarian diplomacy efforts, to ensure a fast and principled humanitarian response</li> <li>(R) Ensure adequate global support from the IFRC Secretariat, including coordination with other divisions to guarantee the most effective, efficient and quality support to the operations</li> </ul>

## Country, Regional and Global Decision-making Points and Approvals

In addition to the general roles above, the table below outlines specific decision points related to emergency operations and clarifies who is responsible for the initiation and ultimate approval of these decisions. These decision points and approval processes are critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of the IFRC's emergency responses.

Decision	Drafter/Requester	Approver(s)
<b>Crisis Categorization Analysis (CCA)</b>	IM Lead in CD/CCD or RO in agreement with HoD  With input by Emergency Health for PHE	<b>HODCC</b>  <b>Deviation from standard categorization: DCC Director, USG Red: HoDCC, Director DCC (Director of Health and Care for PHE), USG NSDOC, SG</b>
<b>DREF application</b>	Operations Lead, HoD	HoDCC, DREF Manager
<b>Surge alert (incl. Rapid Response, ERU and Standby list)</b>	Operations Lead	HoD
<b>Activation of Step In/ Step Aside mechanism</b>	HoD	RD

<b>Appointment of Special Envoy</b>	RD	SG
<b>Appointment of Emergency Coordinator</b>	USG NSDOC	SG
<b>Funding Ask Decision</b>	HoD/ HoDCC With recommendation from DCC Dir. (and Health Dir. for PHE)	SG, RD, USG NSDOC, USG GRHDD, Management cell
<b>Standard Risk Appetite deviations<sup>15</sup></b>	HoD	RD, Director DCC, USG NSDOC
<b>Emergency Appeal</b>	Operations Lead/HoD; Health Coordinator for PHE	RD, Director DCC, Director SPRM, Director Health for PHE
<b>Immediate Response Protocol activation<sup>16</sup></b>	Automatic for RED and Orange	RED and Orange: Automatic for maximum period of 180 days
<b>Operational Strategy</b>	Operations Lead (Health Coordinator co-leads for PHE)	<b>Orange:</b> HoDCC  <b>Red:</b> HoDCC, Manager, Operations Coordination GVA; Emergency Health Lead GVA for PHE
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Project Manager Co-led by health coordinator for PHE	Appeal Manager
<b>Transition/Recovery Plan</b>	Operations Lead (Health Coordinator co-leads for PHE)	DRD, HoDCC
<b>Operational Escalation for Strategic redirection</b>	HoD, Operations Coordination, HoDCC, or Director of DCC; Director of Healthfor PHE	Management Cell and USG

## Escalation Protocols for Timely Decision-making in Emergencies

While the IFRC's multi-layered leadership structures are decentralized and inclusive, this can slow down decision-making and limit clarity on the responsibility and accountability for levels of decision-making. To avoid delays or confusion and retain the commitment to speed and agility, each department at the Secretariat should develop its own escalation protocols for critical decision-making processes, to remove blocks that might impact the response and help to deliver timely solutions. It is up to every delegate/manager responsible for a process, to escalate significant issues in line with the established protocols, to ensure they are being tackled in a timely manner and at the right level.

### “Step-in” and “Step-aside” Mechanisms

In a Red-level and some Orange-level disasters/crises it is often not feasible for a single HoCD/CCD to fulfil all the necessary leadership and representational functions required for an operation of that scale. In these instances, the presence of a second, experienced senior representative of the IFRC can be a vital additional resource during the initial response and

<sup>15</sup> Red-level emergencies automatically adapt elevated appetite.

<sup>16</sup> As detailed in the IFRC Immediate Response protocols

can maximize support for strategic, operational and representational/HD functions. To support this, the IFRC country readiness mapping constitutes a practical tool to understand the level of readiness a delegation and to serve as a reference tool to decide the support needed. There are two options available for this purpose.

1. **“Step-in mechanism”**: This will provide additional support to the HoD/HoCCD through the assignment of an interim “Deputy Head of Delegation” (or “Emergency Head of Office”) mobilized to reinforce leadership and management functions and to help the HOD/HOCCD meet the expected roles and responsibilities in a major emergency. It is particularly recommended for situations where the affected country is covered by a CCD located in another country, to ensure that the necessary in-country, strategic and operational leadership functions are filled. Support from this temporary DHoD/EHoO also allows the permanent HoD/HoCCD to increase their engagement with the diplomatic community, focus on coordination and better accompany the leadership of the National Society and ensure business continuity for existing programmes and for the delegation. The DHoD can take additional functions beyond those mentioned above.

This step-in mechanism will be activated after agreement between the RD and the HoD/HoCCD. Once activated, strategic leadership responsibilities for the emergency response will be divided between the permanent HoD/HoCCD and the new, additional DHoD/EHoO, as agreed with the RD. The DHoD/EHoO will have a specific TOR to capture the agreed roles and responsibilities of the assignment. The National Society leading the response must be properly engaged and informed before activating the “step-in mechanism” to ensure buy-in and acceptance of the DHoD/EHoO and it is critical there is open communication and trust between the permanent HoD and the DHoD/EHoO.

2. **“Step aside mechanism”**: A further mechanism is available in situations where the HoD/HoCCD is less comfortable fulfilling the strategic leadership role of a Red-level response. In this case, the HoD/HoCCD can fully “step aside” to concentrate solely on the pre-emergency programming of the CD or CCD. A DHoD/EHoO would assume full responsibility for the strategic and operational leadership of the Red-level response. This “step aside” mechanism would be a decision of last resort and the same provisions as in the “step-in” mechanism would apply.

## Supporting strategic leadership in complex emergencies

### Emergency coordinator

For Red-level emergencies, the Secretary General can appoint an Emergency Coordinator (EC) (Role outlined in [Annex 1](#) and detailed in EC ToR), whose main tasks is to bring a high level of scrutiny and to address strategic and organizational bottlenecks to improve the delivery of the operation. The EC also brings strategic leadership, both through high-level engagement with the National Society, Membership and RCRC Movement partners, and via Humanitarian Diplomacy, with external partners, to enhance the relevance and efficiency of the operation. The EC is the ultimate decision-maker in a Red emergency. This function lasts for the duration of the Red-level activation (maximum six months) and could be covered by a USG, a RD, the Director of DCC, or the Director of Health for PHE.

## Special Envoys

In a multi-country or multi-region crisis, where several IFRC CDs/CCDs or ROs are involved, or in an extremely high-level, complex, single-country response, the Secretary General may also authorize the full-time or part-time deployment of a Special Envoy (Role outlined in [Annex 1](#) and detailed in SE ToR), to offer strategic input, engage in diplomatic measures and advance humanitarian diplomacy to strengthen the response. The decision to appoint an SE is requested by a RD and approved by the GSM Cell. The request should be endorsed by the affected National Society/ies. A tailored TOR with specific deliverables will be drawn up for each SE deployment and agreed by the RD(s) and the USG NSDOC, to ensure that his/her responsibilities and deliverables are clear and targeted. For a multi-country response, the SE will report to the RD and work closely with the responsible HoDs/HoCCDs on strategic and representational matters. For a multi-region response, the SE will report to the USG NSDOC. The SE role is a time-bound deployment, to be deployed at country or regional level only for the critical period of the Red-level emergency.

## G. COORDINATION PRINCIPLES AND MECHANISMS

Effective internal coordination and strategic alignment are critical to the IFRC Secretariat's ability to manage disasters and crises of all categories. This Section outlines the essential coordination principles and core structure that apply in a response, to enhance information flow, delivery and impact across all members of the IFRC network. This recognizes the principle that operational decision-making must happen as close as possible to the emergency, while still recognizing the important role that each level of the organization and the network plays in the collective delivery of an effective, coordinated response. The key principles of effective coordination are outlined below:

- **Interoperability across all layers of the Secretariat:** Effective response is dependent on two-way, vertical as well as horizontal information flow within the Secretariat and across the network and/or Movement and on ensuring that the strategic, operational, and technical layers of the organization are aligned across country and Headquarters levels. The coordination structure emphasizes the importance of ensuring consistent participation by agreed, relevant representatives in all core coordination meetings, who are then accountable to share information and decisions within their level and between levels in clear and predictable way (see diagram below).
- **Cyclical and predictable:** The IFRC's coordination mechanisms/meetings at all levels will be held according to predictable cycles, following a regular "meet-communicate-work" rhythm, to support consistent disaster and crisis management. The frequency of the cycle can be adjusted, based on the phase, complexity and category of the crisis and the agenda of meetings can be adjusted to reflect the changing situation (while maintaining a consistent overall format).
- **Information sharing as distinct from coordination:** There should be a clear distinction between forums and mechanisms for information sharing, which are designed to disseminate updates and insights across the organization, and those for coordination, which focus on decision-making and operational planning.
- **Timebound:** Coordination mechanisms/meetings or functions will be timebound and will revert to normal structures/functions within an agreed timeframe (three months or longer as required).
- **Documentation:** It will be vital to document decisions and key action points from all coordination mechanisms/meetings, using a decision log or notes/minutes. These will be systematically shared and stored. (see [Annex 7](#)) for more details on Coordination Functions / Mechanisms)

## Core IFRC Secretariat Coordination Mechanisms

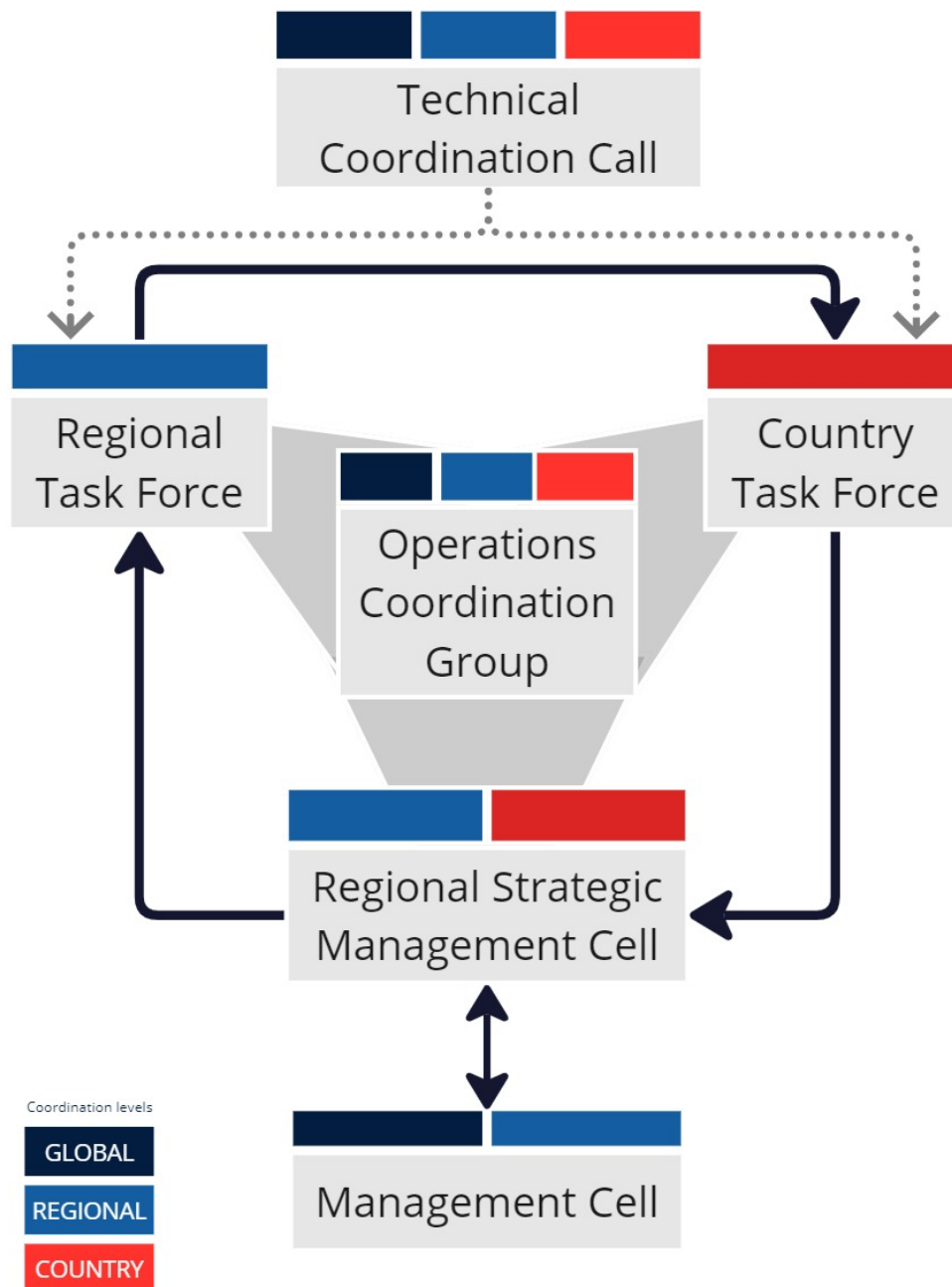
During disasters / crises, the IFRC recognizes six core coordination mechanisms covering the different Secretariat levels – country / country cluster, regional and global. These coordination mechanisms provide a framework for essential communication and decision-making, and a platform to ensure operational quality is monitored and maintained. This is explored in more detail in [Annex 7](#). The six-core mechanisms can be summarized as:

- **Management Cell:** Ensures high-quality delivery, maintains global coherence, oversees operational strategy (including escalation), and drives global strategic engagement and coordination
- **Regional Strategic Management Cell:** Establishes the strategic response direction, monitors progress, and aligns messaging
- **Regional Task Force:** Addresses support needs and tackles obstacles for country operations
- **Country Task Force:** Ensures country-wide activities are aligned and coordinated, while addressing operational challenges
- **Operations Coordination Group:** Ensures operational alignment between the HQ, Regional, Delegation, and Field levels and addresses challenges. In public health emergencies this group systematically includes Emergency Health.
- **Technical Coordination Cell:** Provides technical guidance in each specific technical area and ensures technical quality and standards

In addition to the core coordination mechanisms the ERF provides for specific forums dedicated to information sharing across the organization.

### *Operations Briefing*

The Operations Briefing is an essential informational forum within the IFRC, aimed at sharing critical information related to ongoing emergencies. Its primary objective is to ensure a common understanding across all organizational levels, from global to Delegation, by disseminating up-to-date operational statuses and developments. This briefing does not serve as a decision-making body; instead, it supports collective understanding and equips stakeholders across the organization with timely and crucial updates, for collective action.



The diagram above outlines the flow of communication up and down between the key coordination mechanisms. It is important to acknowledge that the ERF is linked to and informed by other coordination mechanisms at country, regional, and global levels, that are part of the IFRC's wider coordination architecture. This includes both Movement and Membership coordination architecture, Inter-agency and Cluster System structures, Civil-military fora, and Government-led coordination channels, all of which inform the actions and decisions of the Secretariat. Additional measures for Movement or Membership coordination may need to be put in place in a conflict-related response and these would work closely with all Movement partners.

## Activation of the IFRC Internal Coordination Mechanisms

The activation of the coordination structure for emergencies also depends on the Crisis Categorization decision and each categorization - Red, Orange or Yellow - will trigger specific levels of coordination functions. The specific structures that will be activated for each crisis category are outlined in the table below (*see Annex 7 for details on each forum*). This aims to provide a consistent and predictable coordination structure for all levels of emergency, as agreed with global senior management. The frequency can be decided by the leadership and operations at each respective Secretariat level.

	Yellow	Orange	Red
<b>Country Task Force</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Regional Task Force</b>	ON REQUEST	✓ <sup>17</sup>	✓
<b>Operations Coordination Group</b>	ON REQUEST	✓	✓
<b>Regional Strategic Management Cell</b>	ON REQUEST	ON REQUEST	✓
<b>Management Cell</b>	ON REQUEST	ON REQUEST	✓
<b>Technical Coordination Cell</b>	ON REQUEST	ON REQUEST	ON REQUEST

**On Request:** Emergencies vary in scale and complexity, so not all coordination mechanisms are automatically activated for each one – some are activated “on request”, helping to ensure efficient use of resources. Requests for activation can be made by key stakeholders involved in the Emergency Appeal/DREF process [such as Ops Leadership or HDCC, in collaboration with the Director of Health and Care (for PHE), Regional Director Ops Coordinator etc.].

## Operational Coordination overview

During an operation the IFRC will engage in a wide range of coordination mechanisms. These can be broadly outlined as Internal Secretariat, Membership, Movement, and External coordination fora. The table below provides an overview of these core coordination mechanisms under each heading:

<sup>17</sup> To visit the flexibility and details of each coordination mechanism including participants, agenda items, facilitating parties, and frequency, please go to [Annex 7 on Coordination Mechanisms – Coordination Bodies](#).

	Secretariat	Membership <sup>18</sup>	Movement <sup>19</sup>	External <sup>20</sup>
Strategic	Management Cell	Country Coordination Team (CCT)	Movement Platform	Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)
	Regional Strategic Management Cell		Mini Summit  Strategic Tripartite Coordination Platform	
Operational	Regional Task Force	Membership Operational Coordination Team (MeOC)	Operational Coordination Platform	Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) & Clusters meetings
	Country Task Force	Regional Membership Coordination Call		
	Operations Coordination Group			
Tactical	Ops Coordination Meeting	Technical Working Groups (TWGs)	Technical Coordination Platform	Technical Working Groups (TWiGs or TWGs)
	Field Coordination Meeting			
	Sector Planning			

<sup>18</sup> OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES | Membership Coordination in Emergencies

<sup>19</sup> [SMCC Toolkit](#)

<sup>20</sup> [UN Cluster Coordination](#)

## H. LEADERSHIP FOR MULTI-COUNTRY/REGION CRISES

When there is a disaster or crisis that affects multiple countries or regions, additional specific measures are needed to support the response. The ERF outlines this approach below, detailing how the IFRC Secretariat addresses the challenges and processes for categorization, response set-up, funding allocation, roles and responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms for multi-country and multi-region crises. The detailed information is in the revised Emergency Appeal guidelines (see [Annex 8](#) for more details on Multi-Country / Multi-Region (MCMR) crises).

### Multi-country / Multi-region responsibilities

#### Multi-Country:

- **Country Level:** The HoD/HoCCD leads the response and holds overall accountability for in-country strategy localization and implementation
- **Regional Level:** The RD (or delegated Deputy RD) coordinates and directs the response and sets the overall strategy
- **Early Recovery:** The Deputy RD (or delegated HoDCC structure) oversees and directs early recovery efforts

#### Multi-Region:

- **Country Level:** The HoD/HoCCD leads the response and holds overall accountability for in-country strategy localisation and implementation
- **Global Level:** The USG for NSDOC coordinates and directs the response, in full cooperation with the RDs for affected regions. The USG may delegate tasks within the Geneva team based on the crisis type (e.g., health).
- **Regional Level:** RDs (or delegated Deputy RDs) oversee and direct early recovery efforts

### Process and Categorization of Multi-Country / Multi-Region Crises

While a multi-country/multi-region crisis is initially categorized as a whole (following the process in Section C), each affected country receives an independent sub-categorization. This recognizes that the impact and needs may vary significantly across the different countries. Therefore, even if the overall crisis is categorized as Red-level, individual countries might be categorized as Red, Orange, or Yellow, depending on their specific context. This ensures that resource allocations and response efforts are tailored to the specific needs of each affected country within the larger crisis. (See [Annex 8](#) for further details)

### Response Set-up

In a multi-country/multi-region crisis, the IFRC employs flexible response options, firmly led by the Emergency Appeal guidelines. The Regional Strategic Management Cell (for multi-country) or the Management Cell (for multi-region) convenes a meeting to determine the optimal approach. In some contexts, the decision on appeal structure may be taken by the Management Cell at the start of a crisis. This involves deciding between two options:

- **A Multi-country / multi Regional Appeal:** A single overarching Appeal encompassing all the affected countries and regions.
  - Functions as a "parent" appeal, with individual country appeals nested within it

- Unearmarked funds are channeled to the regional level and then allocated to individual countries, based on the established allocation criteria and the needs
- **Separate Funded Appeals:** Individual Appeals launched for each affected country
  - Allows for targeted fundraising and resource mobilization on a country-by-country basis
  - Provides greater financial autonomy and flexibility for each country operation

This decision, and the designation of Emergency Appeal management responsibility, hinges on a thorough assessment of the context, needs, and situation on the ground.

### Key Considerations for Appeal Set-up Decisions:

- **Similarity of Emergencies:** The extent to which the emergency situations across the different countries share common characteristics
- **Type of Crisis:** The specific nature and context of the crisis, including whether it is a natural disaster, health emergency, or conflict-related crisis. It also accounts for whether the different countries are responding or preparing.
- **National Society Preferences:** The preferred approach of the NSs involved, ensuring that they have been supported, where needed, with the right level of information and analysis on the pros and cons of the options presented to them
- **IFRC Secretariat Presence:** The nature and coverage of IFRC offices in the affected countries (e.g., Country Delegations, Country Cluster Delegations, Regional Offices)
- **IFRC Secretariat Capacity:** Capacity of the respective CDs/CCDs to manage one or several separate appeals, including operational, technical and management/support services capacities, such as Financial, PMER, Supply Chain Management and Coordination capacities
- **Movement Presence:** The presence and capacity of Movement partners
- **Funding Potential:** The feasibility of securing adequate funding for a regional Appeal versus for separate Appeals
- **Human Resources:** The availability of personnel (surge or IFRC staff) to manage multiple operations at country, regional or global levels

### Multi-Country / Multi-Region Appeals and Funding Allocations

Regional Appeals necessitate a transparent agreement and process to cover the allocation of unearmarked funds. This is often determined through a proportional allocation based on the needs and the Funding Ask Decision (FAD) for each country within the Appeal.

To ensure equitable and evidence-based allocations, clear criteria should be used and documented (refer to [Annex 8](#) for a recommended list of criteria). The Guiding Principles for such unearmarked funding allocations include:

- **Severity of Crisis:** Prioritizing countries with the most severe humanitarian needs
- **National Society Capacity:** Taking into account the capacity of each NS and its ability to absorb and implement funds effectively for greater humanitarian impact
- **National Society Mandate:** Accounting for each NS' mandate to provide services in areas likely to significantly impact humanitarian need in this type of crisis
- **Implementation Rate:** Calculating the potential speed and efficiency of implementation in each country

- **Movement Presence:** Accounting for the existing Movement footprint and capacity in each country
- **Funding Levels:** Considering existing earmarked and unearmarked funding levels for each country

### Decision-making process for Unearmarked Funding Allocations

All unearmarked funding allocation decisions for Regional Appeals are made in the relevant Regional or Global coordination meetings. In some specific or complex contexts, separate Appeal Allocation Committees can be established to decide on and manage the process (see [Annex 8 for more details](#)). This is done as per the management lines below:

1. **Direct:** Funding allocations:
  - a. **Multi Country:** drafted by the HoDCC, approved by the RD, and validated by the RSMC
  - b. **Multi Regional:** drafted by the Director for DCC (in collaboration with the Director for Health and Care in PHE responses), approved by the USG NSDOC, and validated by the Management Cell.
2. **Committee:** Funding allocations are drafted by the 'Allocation Committee', approved by the relevant RD for Multi-Country Appeals and the USG NSDOC for a Multi-Regional Appeal, and validated by the RSMC.

## I. SECTORAL EXPERTISE

### SECTORAL EXPERTISE

For interventions to be effective, the Secretariat will combine operation leadership expertise with the expertise from the relevant technical sectors. For example, the direction for a migration response must be co-designed with the Migration and Displacement Unit to ensure the operational strategy adopts the latest best practices in supporting displaced populations and does no unintended harm. Similarly, operational strategies addressing drought or other climate-related event must be co-designed with the Climate, Environment and Resilience Unit, and so on.

This sectoral expertise will inform the type of intervention (i.e. what needs to be done to properly address the context), while the operation leads at various level will orchestrate the intervention as laid out in previous section, ensuring that the ERF process is followed, that the response vehicle is appropriate (e.g. DREF vs EA) and that all required enablers are included (e.g. Security, Supply Chain management, Risk Management, etc.).

The case of public health emergencies follows the same principles, combining operational and health expertise. Given the risk to the health of staff and volunteers, and the time sensitive nature of epidemic control intervention, the following section offers specific guidance.

### Leadership in Public Health Emergencies

A public health emergency is the occurrence or threat of an infectious disease outbreak or other threat that could pose a substantial risk to the health of the population or overwhelm routine health capacities. Controlling epidemics and other health emergencies is about anticipating and addressing epidemiological drivers or reducing exposure, morbidity and/or

mortality and responding to the humanitarian impact of public health emergencies requires speed, flexibility, adaptability, and a full understanding of the health drivers. Often, failure to deliver quickly or without relevant information and actions can increase or sustain transmission and harm. A “no regrets” approach can be critical in health emergencies.

### **Intervention Model for Health Emergencies**

Consistent with the sectoral expertise approach, the IFRC empowers experienced health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) experts to set the direction of specific health emergencies at the outset and throughout the course of an epidemic response. In Orange and Red Emergencies related to Public Health Emergencies, the IFRC strategic orientation will be validated by the Health and Care Director and provided by the health team, through proactive engagement with NS health teams, so that technical experts can co-create health strategies and plans. This model seeks to bring clarity to critical decision-making and direction setting between health and operational teams and to reinforce their different responsibilities during the implementation of health emergencies, to better target and speed up IFRC health responses. This model is based on lessons from previous IFRC health emergencies and applications of the co-leadership model and is in line with models used by the UN and NGOs.

The model shows that the Health and WASH teams are responsible for informing the “*what, where, when, and why*” of health interventions included in the Operation Strategy, , including conducting epidemiological risk analyses selecting health/WASH response strategies, modalities and tactics, ensuring minimum technical standards and establishing technical coordination. In parallel, Operations Leads are responsible for the “*how*” of the operation, ensuring that operational coordination and support are in place, including corporate or management systems, such as Finance, SCM, HR, operational Risk Management, communications, security and other critical elements. Health and Operations are jointly responsible for planning and monitoring to ensure the operation adapts to the evolving situation, and for both internal and external coordination and alignment with other sectors. (See [Annex 9](#) and [Annex 10](#) for details).

### **Core Functions Specific to Public Health Emergencies**

In all major public health responses, there is a need to cover all core health functions such as epidemic surveillance, risk and behaviour change, risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) or specific protection needs. In cases where there is no or insufficient emergency health expertise at the country level for these core functions, the next level of the Secretariat will assume those responsibilities (e.g., CCD, or Headquarters) and will designate qualified personnel, including IFRC Secretariat mobilization, to fulfil critical health functions.

## ERF Annexes

Annex No.	Annex Title	Link
<b>01</b>	Key Roles and Responsibilities	<a href="#">Annex 01</a>
<b>01.1</b>	Head of Delegation	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.2</b>	Operations Leadership Country or Cluster	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.3</b>	Regional Ops Lead	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.4</b>	Regional Director	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.5</b>	Deputy Regional Director	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.6</b>	HoDCC	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.7</b>	Special Envoy	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.8</b>	Manager, Operations Coordination	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.9</b>	Director DCC	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.10</b>	Director Health and Care	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.11</b>	USG NSDOC	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.12</b>	Emergency Coordinator	<a href="#">ToR</a>
<b>01.13</b>	Lead Emergency Health	<a href="#">TOR</a>
<b>02</b>	Key Deliverables	<a href="#">Annex 02</a>
<b>03</b>	Risk Appetite in Emergency Response	<a href="#">Annex 03</a>
<b>04</b>	Summary of Immediate Response Protocol	<a href="#">Annex 04</a>
<b>05</b>	Information Management in Red Emergencies	<a href="#">Annex 05</a>
<b>06</b>	Safety and Security in Red Emergencies	<a href="#">Annex 06</a>
<b>07</b>	Coordination Mechanisms	<a href="#">Annex 07</a>
<b>08</b>	Multi-Country and Multi-Region	<a href="#">Annex 08</a>
<b>09</b>	Detailed Health Co-Leadership Model	<a href="#">Annex 09</a>
<b>10</b>	Response to Public Health Emergencies	<a href="#">Annex 10</a>
<b>11</b>	Crises Categorisation Analysis	<a href="#">Annex 11</a>
<b>12</b>	Strategic Leadership Team Guidance	<a href="#">Annex 12</a>
<b>13</b>	Key References Material	<a href="#">Annex 13</a>
<b>14</b>	Rapid Operational Check-in – Guidance <sup>[in development]</sup>	<a href="#">Annex 14</a>
<b>15</b>	Coordination between Health and Operations at Headquarters levels (to be developed).	
<b>16</b>	Dual-matrix management model (to be developed).	
<b>17</b>	Always ready 24/7 approach (to be developed).	

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

Ref	Acronym	Full form
1	Renewal	Agenda for Renewal
2	CBS	Community-Based Surveillance
3	CCA	Crisis Categorisation Analysis
4	CCD	Country Cluster Delegation
5	CCMC	Community Case Management of Cholera
6	CD	Country Delegation
7	CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
8	DAPS	Dignity, Access, Participation and Safety
9	DCC	Disasters, Climate and Crises
10	DHoD	Deputy Head of Delegation
11	DoC	Duty of Care
12	DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
13	EA	Emergency Appeal
14	EC	Emergency Coordinator
15	EHoO	Emergency Head of Operations
16	EMT	Emergency Medical Team
17	ENA	Emergency Needs Assessment
18	ERF	Emergency Response Framework
19	ERU	Emergency Response Unit
20	FAD	Funding Ask Decision
21	GRHDD	Global Relations, Humanitarian Diplomacy and Digitalisation
22	GSMC	Global Strategic Management Cell
23	GSU	Global Security Unit
24	GVA	Geneva
25	HD	Humanitarian Diplomacy
26	HealthCo	Health Coordinator
27	HEOPs	Head of Emergency Operations
28	HoCCD	Head of Country Cluster Delegation
29	HoD	Head of Delegation
30	HoDCC	Head of Health, Disasters, Climate and Crises
31	HQ	Headquarters
32	HR	Human Resource
33	IASC	The Inter-Agency Standing Committee
34	ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
35	IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
36	IM	Information Management
37	IMCo	Information Management Coordinator
38	IPaC	Infection Prevention and Control
39	IRP	Immediate Response Protocol
40	ITD	Information Technology and Digitalisation
41	ITT	Indicator Tracking Table
42	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

Ref	Acronym	Full form
43	MCMR	Multi-Country/ Multi-Region Crises
45	MHD	Misinformation and Disinformation
46	MOH	Minister of Health
47	MPSCS	Management Policy, Strategy and Corporate Services
48	MSR	Minimum Security Requirements
49	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
50	NS	National Society
51	NSIF	National Society Investment Framework
52	NSD	National Society Development
53	NSDOC	National Society Development and Operations Coordination
54	NSP	National Society Preparedness
55	Ops	Operations
56	OS	Operations Strategy
57	OSG	Office of the Secretary General
58	PEAR	Project Expenditure Approval Request
59	PGI	Protection Gender Inclusion
60	PHE	Public Health Emergencies
61	PMER	Planning Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting
62	RCCE	Risk Communication and Community Engagement
63	RCRC	Red Cross Red Crescent
64	RD	Regional Director
65	RM	Risk Management
66	RO	Regional Office
67	ROR	Rapid Operational Review (ROR)
68	RSMC	Regional Strategic Management Cell
69	RTE	Real-Time Evaluation
70	SCM	Supply Chain Management
71	SDB	Safe and Dignified Burial
72	SE	Special Envoy
73	SEAH	Safeguarding and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
74	SG	Secretary General
75	SIMS	Surge Information Management Support
76	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
77	SPRM	Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation
78	ToR	Terms of Reference
79	UN	United Nations
80	USG	Under Secretary General
81	VSAT	Very small aperture terminal
82	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
83	WHO	World Health Organisation